Extension of National Highway No. 8-A

655. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any demand for the extension of National Highway No. 8-A from Gandhidham onwards to Jakhau via Mundra and Mandvi Port;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There has been a demand from Hon'ble Member of Parliament for extending NH 8A from Gandhidham onwards to Jakhau via Mundra and Mandvi Port. However, no such proposal has come from the State Government.

(c) As and when such a proposal is received from the State Government the same would be considered alongwith proposals of other States subject to availability of funds and *inter-se* priority.

Declaration of Road as National Highway

656. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to declare the road from Tellicherry (Kerala) to Mysore (Karnataka) as National Highway; and

(b) if so, the amount proposed to be allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Direct Local Call Facility

657. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any representation from M.Ps. to directly link the areas falling under National Capital Region especially Bulandshahr, Khurja, Sikandrabad, Dadri, Jewar etc., with local call facility;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

In some cases representation from Hon'ble MPs have been received from time to time for provision of local call facility between different towns of National Capital Region which are spread over States of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana UP and Punjab.

(c) As per the Department's policy, the local call facility at 300 sec. pulse rate is provided in bigger exchange systems within the local area of exchange system.

Also (Local) call facility at 180 sec. pulse rate is provided :—

(i) Between exchanges within a Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA).

(ii) When the radial distance between two Short Distance Charging Centres (SDCC) of two SDCCs is less than 20kms.

(iii) When the local areas of two telephone exchange systems have a common boundary. The towns of NCR which fall under any of the above three categories have been provided with local call facility at 180 sec. pulse rate.

[English]

Indian Science Congress Session

658. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a session of Indian Science Congress was held at Hyderabad in January 1998;

(b) if so, the points discussed in the Session; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) . (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) and (c) Discussions held during the 85th Annual Session of the Indian Science Congress at Hyderabad centred around the focal theme "Science & Technology in Independent India - Retrospect and Prospect". The Congress was addressed by the then Prime Minister of India and General President of the Indian Science Congress Association. There were presentations on other current topics of research in different branches of Science and Engineering. Discussions were also held on interdisciplinary topics of contemporary interest.

Indian Science Congress Association are yet to forward their recommendations made at the Session to Government.